

DELEGATE RITTER: I do not think that would be hard for our legislators. I think if they advocate the overthrow of our government by force or violence I think it would be very evident to you and me and to all of the legislators. I think they could set up qualifications. There are very able lawyers in that body, and I feel that they can do that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any other delegate desire to speak in opposition?

Delegate Blair.

DELEGATE BLAIR: Mr. Chairman, I think the oath itself accomplishes the whole philosophy that is promulgated by advocates of this amendment. I think that the oath of office is an affirmative position, that the affiant will support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Maryland and the laws thereof, by reason of taking this position affirmatively. I certainly do not think that the amendment means anything.

I think it is fully covered in the oath of office, and it is allocated specifically only to public offices of profit or trust, by appointment or by election.

I think the oath is all-encompassing, and it does the very thing that the amendment intends to do.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion?

Delegate Grant.

DELEGATE GRANT: I have a question to address to Delegate Ritter.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does any other delegate desire to speak?

*(There was no response.)*

If not, Delegate Ritter, will you take the floor and respond to a question?

DELEGATE RITTER: I will attempt to.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Grant.

DELEGATE GRANT: Delegate Ritter, it would appear that the last sentence of your proposed amendment is almost a bill of attainder. Would you be willing to accept an amendment to your amendment, to strike out the last sentence, which I think would get you past that constitutional impediment?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Ritter.

DELEGATE RITTER: Wait until I talk to my other constitutional lawyer. If we get another vote, we will knock it out.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does that mean you modify the amendment?

DELEGATE RITTER: Yes, by knocking out the last sentence.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any objection?

The Chair hears none.

The amendment is modified by striking the last sentence, beginning on line 11, and all of lines 12 and 13.

Does any other delegate desire to speak to the amendment?

Delegate Willoner.

DELEGATE WILLONER: I have a question for either of the makers of the amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Take your choice.

DELEGATE WILLONER: Delegate Vecera.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Vecera, will you take the floor to yield to a question?

DELEGATE VECERA: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Willoner.

DELEGATE WILLONER: This provision as stated is absolutely inoperable, unless you concede that an act done by an officer who advocates the violent overthrow of our country is an illegal act. For example, if a judge advocates the overthrow of the government, would any of his decisions be any good? Is that how you plan to enforce this?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Vecera.

DELEGATE VECERA: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Willoner.

DELEGATE WILLONER: How do you plan to enforce it then?

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Vecera.

DELEGATE VECERA: I think by virtue of eliminating the last sentence. That would be the intent of the enabling act. In order to enforce it, the last sentence, by virtue of having —

THE CHAIRMAN: Delegate Vecera, are you speaking of the sentence that was deleted?

DELEGATE VECERA: Yes, sir.

I am trying to answer Delegate Willoner's question.